

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HIGHAMS PARK ACADEMY TRUST RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 4 MAY 2023 AT 10.15 A.M. AT THE SCHOOL AND VIRTUALLY**

Present: Tracy Penfold (Chair)-Trustee  
Nigel Armsby-Principal and Trustee  
Erik Mesel-Trustee  
Alan Benton-Trustee  
Dave Brown-Trustee  
Richard Palmer-Trustee

Also in Attendance: Dr Tim Morris, Company Secretary/Secretary to the Board  
Mr Jacob Adeshina, School Business Manager

Clerk to the Committee: Caroline Russell

**Summary of agreements and actions:**

Minute reference	Formal agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion date
3.2.1.	Fixed Asset Register: Meeting to be arranged w/c 08-05-2023	DB/JA	Ongoing
4.3.	Original Budget 2023/24: (i)Draft+ monthly monitoring info to be sent to trustees per Academies Financial Handbook. (ii)Further meetings re budget assumptions, projected budget deficit and need to retain reserves to pay for building work. (iii)Submit budget 31-08-2023 following July full Board agreement.	JA/trustees  Committee+ JA  JA	Ongoing Monthly Ongoing  31-08-2023
7	Catering Contract Including School Rebuild Programme: -Amend 5% increase to refer to an inflation clause for review annually against external factors. -Existing agreement to roll over 6 monthly. -Recommend to full Board on 18-05-2023	JA/TM/RP  JA TP/JA	Asap  Ongoing 18-05-2023
8	Funding for P Block Toilets: <b>AGREED</b> subject to financial provision being available.	JA	Ongoing
9	Report re Proposals for Energy Efficient Lighting using DFE procurement framework: <b>AGREED</b>	JA	Ongoing
10	Date and Time of Next Meeting: 22-06-2023-10.15 a.m.-School and Virtual.	All to note.School to action.	22-06-2023

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**



- 1.1 Welcome  
All were welcomed to the meeting.
- 1.2. Quorum  
The meeting was quorate with 6 trustees present.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 2.1 Declarations of Interest in the Current Agenda Items  
There were none.
3. **MINUTES**
- 3.1. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 09-03-2023  
These were received and accepted. The minutes were considered signed, e-copies to be retained by the School and Governor Services.
- 3.2. Matters Arising
- 3.2.1. Fixed Asset Register  
**ACTION:** Meeting to be arranged w/c 08-05-2023.
- 3.2.2. Self Assessment Form  
Complete in April.
- 3.2.3. Audit Fee Renegotiation  
This has been agreed due to additional work required establishing opening balances and adjustments.
- 3.2.4. EFSA Funding 2023/24  
Details are on the portal.
- 3.2.5. Budget Monitoring  
Current agenda item.
- 3.2.6. School Rebuilding Programme  
Details are on the portal.
- 3.2.7. Staff Absence and Contract Extension  
Current agenda item.
4. **FINANCE-MARCH 2023 MONTHLY REPORT-JA**
- 4.1. JA reported a projected operating deficit of £388,358 compared to an expected £55,000 surplus. There have been overspends re staffing, exam fees (responsibilities being clarified), catering (figures corrected to reflect that parents can pay in advance so monies are released as due). There is a £90,000 deficit on capital. Total deficit £478,104. This position reflects earlier underinvestment in IT but there is a need to budget revenue carefully in 2023/24 including re IT orders.  
**Q.** Was the IT expenditure in the budget? **A.** Yes, but not forecast. There has been devolved formula capital funding allocated this year but needs to be reconciled to the CIF project. It was assumed that the overspend would be covered by accumulated reserves.  
**Q.** Give more detail re the revenue over-spend? **A.** The teachers' pay award was part unfunded (3% budgeted, 5% agreed by government equating to a £100,000 overspend), school expansion and increased staffing re pupil behaviour.  
**Q.** Industrial action is still ongoing so the final outcome could be worse? **A.** Yes. There has been a proposal for an additional £1,000 lump sum + 3%. There is no additional funding for a pay award but some costs can be absorbed re budget buffer,



vacancies, provisions for maternity leave, budget for trainee teachers which reimbursed. There is a support staff projected variance of £220,165 reflecting employment of 2 additional staff. Support staff term time only provision for annual leave may need a provision which may be backdated.

- 4.2. **Q.** So new staff may be paid more than old staff on the same salary scale? **A.** Yes. Arises because annual leave is taken during school holiday periods but accrued in term time. A prudent approach to budgeting has been endorsed. There is another issue re long serving cleaners and pay scales under the Equality Act. A provision should be made but statute of limitations may apply. Contracts are being reviewed for legality including re sick pay.  
There is a total unfunded projected deficit of £291,802 re unfunded pay awards, pension contributions and future staffing structure.  
NA noted that coordinated strike action is likely including ASCL (Association of School and College Leaders).

4.3. Original Budget 2023/24-Screenshared

**ACTION:** Draft to be sent to trustees + financial monitoring info per Academies Trust Handbook.

4.3.1. Revenue Income

-General Annual Grant (GAG) funding is based on student numbers of 1542. 6<sup>th</sup> form numbers were formerly high but reducing and variable. However, age weighted pupil unit (AWPU) funding may vary and so may projected numbers for the next 3 years.

6<sup>th</sup> form numbers are reducing due to resits in Year 12 only and children going elsewhere. Notional special needs funding is given but may vary. -ASCL assumptions are followed re 3-year financial forecasts.

-Staff costs are checked by the HR manager re pay scale and full time equivalent (FTE), teaching and learning responsibility points. Some resignations have been received already.

-A JA email identifies cost issues for 2022 3/4 including the inflation factors to apply (ASCL assumptions used).

**Q.** Is there a lag in the timing of EFSA payments? **A.** Income is set annually by GAG funding, paid monthly, pupil premium funding is paid quarterly, others income sources bi-annually.

**Q.** Are payments fixed? **A.** GAG funding has not changed, pupil premium funding may vary with census figures. **Q.** Paid in arrears? **A.** Yes, income is based on historic pupil numbers.

**Q.** Why is there no catering expenditure shown for Year 1 of the 3 year forecast and why is support staff gross pay lower for 2023/24 than 2022/23? **A.** No cleaning figures are included as yet. **Q.** So no cost of cleaning the school? **A.** No, may be outsourced. Tender results have been received but not yet evaluated. Need to decide if cleaning is to be out-sourced or in-house.

**Q.** If the budget is £3/4 million overspent is it sustainable? **A.** Known cleaning costs need to be included but won't be more expensive than currently and less than cleaning during COVID when more cleaning was undertaken. **C.** Am concerned about staff costs in particular given that 4.5% was allowed in 22/23 and was insufficient. **Q.** What figure is in GAG for Years 2 and 3 of the forecast? **A.** ASCL assumptions noting that CPI (consumer price index) is higher than RPI (retail price index).

Hope expressed that cleaning, energy and premises costs will reduce and lettings income increase with rebuild (but will need a realistic rate to cover wear and tear in a limited part of the school to local community only. Staff overtime costs reduce profitability of lets + age of astroturf is beyond useful life. EM noted that elsewhere lettings may be administered by apps on a charitable basis.



## **ACTIONS:**

- Further meeting needed to consider budget assumptions, projected deficit and need to retain reserves to pay for building work.
- Submit budget by 31-08-2023 following July full Board agreement.

### 4.3.2. August 2022 Outturn Figures-Screenshared

These were noted for information.

Items were noted re pension contributions (advised by LA at year end based on triennial valuations).

-£120,000 payments re IT (£30,000 refunded) are not included but could be noted.

-No capital funding is included but there is a summer grant + audit adjustments.

-Additional columns are needed for final forecast outcome for trustees to ensure that the trust is not overspending and the figures need to be issued on a timely basis.

**ACTION: Outturn figures to be reviewed and presented at the June resources committee meeting**

### 4.4. DFE Financial Support for Academy Trusts in Financial Difficulties

Documentation was received but not considered applicable to Highams Park Academy Trust given level of reserves.

## **5. ESTATES MANAGEMENT**

### 5.1. Schools' Rebuilding Programme-RP

-The design team have met with LBWF on 2 occasions with difficulties arising re use by LBWF of Building Schools for the Future strategy different to current DFE assumptions and design elements including re disabled access and internal layouts.

-Client/contractor meetings will consider issues including layouts of temporary and permanent buildings and exam arrangements.

### 5.2. Estate Group Feedback

TP noted that meetings are held fortnightly.

**Site Manager Role:** This has been advertised with 1 application received. The current post holder is leaving the caretakers' house. (Various options noted).

**Compactor:** Further quotes are to be obtained with resources committee to approve the reserve spend.

**School Cleaning:** Tenders were returned 28-04-2023.

**Insurance Claims:** These were noted re drainage pipe in car park, roof trim repairs to sports hall, fencing to front of 6<sup>th</sup> form block damaged by falling tree.

**Capital Funding for Energy Efficiency Improvements:** Funding has been allocated for proposed update to LED lighting.

## **6. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT**

### 6.1. Site Visit Checks

There are regular visual site checks by JA and RP.

-Overall the School is clean and compliant re health and safety. There are minor issues re COSHH (Care of Substances Hazardous to Health) signage, fire extinguishers, untidy/trailing computer wires, noise level and low temperature in server room.

-Key issues are re the condition of pupil toilets (lack of soap, toilet rolls and missing/damaged toilet seats). **Q.** Are these inspected daily? **A.** Yes.

-1<sup>st</sup> Aid box contents are very old.

-There is a recurring problem with P block glass doors.



- 6.2 Demonstration of Health and Safety Software  
-The planned maintenance section was reviewed including for fire alarm tests, service reports, multiple tests by 1 post holder, passenger lifts 3 monthly service including what should be done.  
-The system can send compliance reports and generate actions.
7. **UPDATE ON CATERING CONTRACT INCLUDING REBUILD OF SCHOOL**  
-The meeting noted proposal to extend the current contract with prices to increase with effect from September 2023 by 5%.  
-Commitment to profit share of £1750 per month,  
-Proposal to increase tariff annually in April until March 2026 by 5% with a fixed profit share. (2023/24 £24,000, 2024/25 £30,000 and 2025/26 £37,000). The offer is subject to a stable operating and economic environment e.g. no adverse reduction in student numbers or significant inflation, major disruption during School Rebuilding Programme.  
**ACTIONS:**  
- Annual 5% increase to review annually against external factors.  
-Existing agreement to roll over 6 monthly.  
-Recommend to full Board on 18-05-2023.
8. **REPORT TO SEEK FUNDING FROM RESERVES FOR WORKS ON P BLOCK TOILETS**
- 8.1. The report noted minimum requirements re number of toilets, demolition of some toilets during school rebuilding, difficulty of monitoring, regular damage, perception of pupils in recent pupil survey that this area is unsafe.
- 8.2. Accordingly, design changes are proposed to facilitate monitoring and reduce the scope for damage to the facilities. Works are proposed for summer 2023. All toilets are locked during lesson times. Quotes have been sought and are expected by the end of May 2023.  
**ACTION: (AGREED)** subject to financial provision being available).
9. **REPORT RE PROPOSALS FOR ENERGY EFFICIENT LIGHTING**  
**ACTION:** Noted and **AGREED** to use of DFE procurement framework. (Estimated savings £25,000 per annum).
10. **POLICIES**
- 10.1. Gifts and Hospitality Policy  
To presented at the June resources committee. To include procedure to authorise Adult lunch cover FSM and Hospitality
- 10.2. Charging and Remissions Policy  
Noted policy presented at previous committee meeting.
- 11 **DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**
- 11.1 Date and Time of Next Meeting  
22 June 2023-10.15 a.m.- School and virtual.
- 11.2. Draft Agenda Items for Next Meeting  
Include consideration of benchmarking report.



The meeting closed at 12.45p.m.

Chair: ..... (print)

..... (sign)

Date: .....